10: d'Orleans--266 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 396, 462, 697, 834

[LSS: at Muong Ngoi] "As I walk down by the side of the river I find a very animated scene; prisoners are going to and fro with manacles on their legs, which do not seem to inconvenience them at all. Elsewhere, men are making rafts and cutting planks; some of them are sawing a tree; they work horizontally, in pairs, putting in wedges as they advance. Women are fetching water in buckets made of bamboo tubes; they take the opportunity of bathing, and do not seem hindered by any bashful feelings. There is a curious remark to make on this point: amongst the Thaïs of the Black River, the men never hesitate to strip themselves, and enter the water; but the women appear more reserved; here, on the contrary, they are the ones that feel no shame, whilst their husbands seem to avoid undressing in our presence."

10: d'Orleans--271-272 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 248, 286, 402, 462

[LSS: in the village of Ban Sop Huan] "Under the houses the women are busy in various employments, and the young girls are separating the cotton from its grain. They use an ingenious machine for this purpose: a tray is placed upon a support about the level of the waist; above it, two rollers, one of iron and one of wood, turn in contrary directions, as the cotton passes between them it is freed from its impurities, which drop on one side, while the textile fabric falls on the other. One of the rollers is moved with one hand by a simple crank while the other is worked by the foot and a pedal [272] which corresponds with an eccentric, it is also furnished with a flywheel (the machine is made entirely of wood). After the cotton is cleaned it is placed in baskets, about twenty-four inches high and ten wide. When full they are sold for one rupee each.

Elsewhere the spun cotton is being dyed, while other women are making a blue stuff, crossed with yellow threads. They are seated, and use a weaving loom with two pedals, two shuttles, and three small boards. They throw one shuttle after the movement of the two small boards, and the other after the third. Tobacco is being dried on some bamboos and further away another group is winding silk."

10: d'Orleans--287 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 286, 301, 462, 534

"As soon as we are fairly in Mekong, we stop on the left bank for luncheon, near a small village hidden among the cocoa-trees. A good road traverses it, and leads to the pagoda; the women are working at the cotton, carding it with a sort of small bow, spinning and weaving it; the children impress me by the fairness of their skin; a great many wear bracelets on their feet. Hanging in the courtyard of the pagoda, I notice a bell at least two yards long, made from the hollow trunk of a tree, it is struck every morning and evening."

565 The common people, kind and carefree in character, roamed
175* over the country in all directions as easy-going masters, leaving
/462/ household tasks to the women and the work of the fields to dependents of an inferior race or to slaves. They were excellent boatmen and traders rather than farmers, so that they liked to perform the function of peddlers and served as a link between the multiple /55/ varieties of mankind which inhabited Lan-Xang.

567 Slavery existed--slaves could be obtained through capture, as
175* the result of debt or through trade--and brought high profits to those
563 who engaged in this traffic. In the region of Muong-Swa there was also a kind of serfdom which was applied to certain Kha tribes placed under the patronage of the king, the princes or the chief representatives of the nobility.

565 But if we consider the gentle and happy temperament of this
175* people whose good humor made up for everything, we are justified in believing that the relations between the various social levels must have been free of any harshness.

191 They spoke a dialect derived from the language which was imported into the basin of the Ménam by Rama Khamheng at the end of the thirteenth century and which was itself derived from the
771 graphs of India (1). They practiced orthodox Buddhism together
793
564

1. Cf. Mission Pavie, op. cit. /Études diverses, Vol. II, "Recherches sur l'Histoire du Cambodge du Laos et du Siam"/ Inscription of Sukhothaï translated by Father Schmitt, p. 192: "It was in (1287 A. D.) that the king Rama-Khameng summoned a teacher who created Thaï writing."

with the cult of the "Phi" or Genii which represented for them the beneficent or maleficent forces of Nature. The bonzes were of comparatively pure morals amidst these peoples for whom enjoyment and pleasure were, when /56/ all is considered, the true gods. Although they were fairly ignorant and recited their prayers in Pali
/782/ without understanding them, they did not lack a certain air of nobility. They also enjoyed a high regard and had as much favor as they could desire. The bonzeries[1] which were built near the pagodas were at once places of inviolable asylum, schools frequented by all the children of the village, and workshops where trades could be learned.

/[1] Buddhist Monasteries--Analyst./

285 lacquer -- red on the inside and black on the outside -- and deco-
532 rated with a fine gilt design which makes a border, like a galloon" (1).
175*

1. Cf. G. Maspero, ibid. /Un empire colonial francais: l'Indochine. Paris, 1929-1930/, pp. 190-191.

286 Even today weaving remains women's work, and is done solely in
462 the home. The materials, which may be silk or cotton, striped or
532 splashed with colors, embroidered or spangled with gold and silver thread, nevertheless acquire, under the action of light and carefree hands, chatoyant, harmonious or dazzling tones, and yet the looms which are used are simple in the extreme. Patterns "are obtained, as before the invention of the Jacquard loom, by alternately isolating or raising certain woof threads by means of thin bamboo splints" (2).

2. Cf. L. de Reinach, ibid. /Le Laos, posthumous edition, Paris, 1911/, p. 333.

181 Thus did the Laotian of the seventeenth century live in peace, respecting the law of the least effort with an amiable perserverance amidst his laughter and his games. . . . The princes were perhaps the
/565/ only ones in the whole kingdom to know any of the worries which power and its exigencies bring, and it was for not having wished to compromise with his authoritarian principles that King Souligna, towards the end of his reign, compromised the destinies of his people forever.

643* Condemnation of the heir apparent to death. He had three chil-
175* dren, a son Tiao Ratsabout and two daughters. His son married Nang-
648* Tian-Koumali, who gave birth in her turn to two children, King-Kitsarath and Intha-Som. Nang-Tian-Koumali was the sister of a prince of the Sip-Song-Panas who had been driven out of his country by a Chinese invasion and whom the king of Lan-Xang had welcomed in Vientiane together with his family. Tiao Ratsabout, however, committed the imprudence of seducing the wife of the chief palace page. In accordance with his edict which punished the crime of
/684/ adultery by death, Souligna pitilessly referred the deceived husband's complaint to the royal tribunal and allowed his son to be sentenced to capital punishment

The result was that at the king's death, which occurred /130/ in 1694, the direct heirs to the crown were his grandsons King-Kitsarath

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[563]

who work gold mines--and by the inhabitants of several regions, whose state of fortune would nevertheless enable them to use a more precious metal.

Jewelry and examples of the goldsmith's art are found in different forms and types which vary greatly with the region and race, as will be seen by the nomenclature given in Chapter IX.

262

Food. The Laotian scorns the pleasures of the table, and is generally a moderate eater and drinker. Steam-cooked glutinous rice forms the basis of his food supply. To this he adds salt, peppers, various other spices, fresh or preserved fish, etc. Besides these, but less frequently, his day-to-day diet may be varied with poultry, eggs, buffalo meat, beef and pork, as well as venison. To be sure, it is mainly on the occasion of public or private festivals, which are fairly numerous in the course of the year, that the Laotian improves on his usual rather frugal fare in this way.

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The customary beverage is water which may be taken directly from the rivers or first be hastily decanted into jars or water-coolers of porous earthenware. In general, Laotians prefer water taken directly from the river to that which has been filtered. Finally, the people of Laos consume rice brandy which is obtained by distillation, and a kind of beer made by cold fermentation of rice mixed with paddy husks.

[527]

The use of these drinks, aside from rare exceptions, is reserved for holidays.

152

Physical appearance, character, occupations. The Laotian's character is, in general, mild, friendly and happy. His physiognomy is [181] open and smiling. Not quarrelsome by nature, he even shrinks from coming to blows in extreme cases and prefers to end a dispute with an outburst of laughter rather than with blows.

Since, all in all, it has few needs and inhabits a land with luxuriant vegetation which is abundantly favored with products to be had for the scavenging, this happy people can easily satisfy its needs and be content with its fate. [Illustration alongside text here.]

461

It is assuredly lazy, but out of indifference much rather than out of any deliberate intent. It cannot grasp the advantage or utility of a regular and prolonged effort beyond what is strictly necessary to provide it with a living and a few distractions to which, in reality, its own joyous disposition makes the greatest contribution.

462

To the men are reserved the chief tasks, which have a more virile and noble character than those which are the women's lot.

241

462 Tilling the ricefields, hunting, fishing and managing rafts and
241 pirogues take up about six months of the year. The rest of the time they rest and enjoy themselves. The status of women in Laos, although not as low and painful as that of other women of Asiatic races, is nevertheless not as pleasant as that of their husbands. In fact, all the petty farming tasks fall on them. They perform all the household labors, care for the poultry yard and the livestock, etc. They do the cooking, decorticate the paddy, go and fetch wood and water, spin, weave and dye cotton and silk, take care of the children, etc. Less [182] fortunate than her husband, the Laotian woman has no leisure except on holidays, and even then she has to make all the preparations without letting her daily occupations suffer.

142 Of ordinary height, generally well made and even elegant of
562 figure, the Laotian woman has a friendly face and is not without either grace or coquetry before her marriage. This does not mean that there are no homely girls, but these are rather an exception. As she grows older and worn from bearing children the Laotian woman loses much of her early grace, but in spite of everything she retains her joyousness, her high spirits and her very pronounced taste for celebrations when there is singing and feasting.

862 Laotian mothers worship their children. They take great care
858 of them and often push their weakness for their children to such a point as to prolong the period of breast-feeding, often beyond the child's fourth year.

342 Dwellings. Like all the representatives of the Thai family, the
574 Laotians inhabit houses which are rectangular in shape and are always raised one or two meters above the GROUND on piles. Wood and bamboo, in the form of beams, framing members, rafters, door and window casings, partitions, doors, windows, floors and shingles, are used to build houses, without the use of any nails, all joints and assemblies being fastened together with rattan.

The dimensions of the houses vary greatly and depend on the number of families that they are designed to shelter. Verandas with roofs which are sharply inclined and come down quite low are placed around the house, mainly on the south and west, to temper the heat of the sun and serve as a vestibule, a reception hall or a workshop. The family stays there during the day, as on a sort of neutral ground where people who are coming and going can be received without transgressing custom, which decrees that no one except members of the family and close friends shall have access to the inner apartments, which form the private home of the house's inhabitants.

satisfaction and finds a pleasant test of his abilities in setting words to refrains whose meaning is unknown and in stimulating laughter or pleasant and amusing ideas in his audience, either by vaunting the joys of love and the plastic perfections of the human body, or by recalling [217] useful or pleasant memories, or by honoring justice and goodness. The morals of these folk, who are indolent because they are content with very little and are happy and healthy, and to whom all our subtleties are unknown, permit the greatest license in songs and improvisations and the greatest realism and crudity in the expression of thoughts.

In spite of this, there is not the least unhealthy intention in either the poet or his audience. As we have seen above in connection with burials, children of both sexes attend all these festivities accompanied by their parents. They all take pleasure in the same refrains and laugh at the same funny sayings, not because they are vicious but because they are pure pagans for whom enjoyment and pleasure are like gods. The songs are animated by graceful gestures, and together with the music form a whole which is poetic according to their particular esthetic canons and which is simply a manifestation of art and not an indication of loose morals.

Theater. The Laotians also have a dramatic repertory consisting of longwinded plays, epics, religious and warlike stories, romantic tales, ancient legends, etc. These poems are played by several actors, with an orchestra and supernumeraries, and require many very ornate costumes which have not varied in form since the earliest times. Usually, however, the costumes are mere tinsel.

Like the Cambodian and Siamese theater from which it comes, the Laotian theater interprets age-old works taken from the Védas, the Ramayana or the Mahabharata. To this repertory are added purely Kmer plays and various adaptations of Burmese origin which are performed in the classical costumes and in which a strong tinge of comedy and modernism and a bit of satire are mingled with the ancient traditions.

Women are excluded from the theater, and the female roles are played by young men. As in the case of songs and improvisations, dramatic knowledge, the repertory of plays and the art of acting are handed down from father to son. The actors are called Lakhone and plays are called Kam-Kong-Lakhone or Kam-Kong [218] Fone-Lakhone if they include dances or ballets. Finally, one last dramatic genre

536 of Burmese origin is called I-Ke or Lakhone-I-Ke.

There are also animated Shadow theaters in Laos, like the Chinese or Javanese shadow theaters. The figurines in them are quite large, completely articulated and strikingly lifelike in all their attitudes and in their gestures, which correspond perfectly to the words of their manipulators. Some of these shadow figures are so well articulated that they scrupulously reproduce the movements of the mouth, nose, eyes, etc. Finally, so that they need envy no one, the Laotians also have a puppet theater [Guignol] like our French puppet theater of Lyons. The puppets represent local types and costumes, banter certain social classes with their sarcasm and ridicule certain personages who lend themselves easily to criticism. The artists who make these little wooden knaves function have as much verve, malice and wit as their colleagues in Europe, and although their wit is usually somewhat coarse it is perfectly adapted to the milieu. The puppets enjoy great public favor, and so their performances, which last far into the night, are among those most enjoyed by an audience which is always numerous and attentive. Old men, adults and children come and stay for hours at a time, gasping and lifting their faces towards the opening out of which the puppets' heads and shoulders protrude. The witty sayings, jokes of all kinds and even the gestures of these puppets often shake the whole audience with a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

535 Dancing. The dance (fone in Laotian) finds little favor with the Laotians. Scarcely any but men engage in this pastime, and they
462 dance a kind of Pyrrhic during the feast of rockets and a Phallic at the time of the pirogue regattas. During festivals singers and song-
857 stresses often mix dancing with their songs, but it is limited to a few rhythmic gestures of the hands and upper part of the body, without any movement of the feet.

There are no professional women dancers in Laos as there are in Siam or Cambodia. I know of only one ballet corps, [219] that of Luang-Prabang, which is composed exclusively of children and very young people. This group, which is nicely costumed, is developing under the direction of one master and several supervisors. It executes figures and a few steps which are always very graceful, while carrying multicolored lanterns in the shape of balloons or flowers. The dances are accompanied by songs and form a most harmonious and pleasant ensemble.

181 bread by their work, they have scarcely a care for the morrow.
461 Scrupulous observers of the traditions handed down to them by their ancestors, they live an utterly carefree life and instinctively dread everything foreign or unknown to them.

463 Occupations. The men busy themselves with the tasks of farming,
241 fishing and hunting. They are very industrious and skilled farmers, and can draw admirably on the soil's resources. They bring in the water
462 needed for irrigating their rais or mountain ricefields through ingenious canals built along the sides of hills, and they also know how to capture springs, often very distant ones, for the same purpose. To decorticate paddy, they use mills driven by artificial waterfalls. The women perform the household chores, take care of the children, make and mend clothes, harvest and spin cotton, breed silkworms, unwind the cocoons and mill the silk. Theirs also is the task of supplying the home with water and with wood which they gather in the forest, as well as sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, getting in and decorticating the rice. *These many tasks leave Thai women and girls* little leisure, and it would thus seem only natural that they should profit by a moment of pleasure, whenever one presents itself in the midst of their multiple duties. They do, in fact, go in for fun eagerly and behave as keenly, despite their more reserved appearance, as their Laotian sisters.

361 Houses. There is no difference between Laotian villages and Thai villages, except that the latter are better kept and cleaner.
342 Thai houses are generally longer and higher than those of the
592 Laotians, by reason of the custom which decrees that the whole family--parents, children and grandchildren--shall live under the same roof. Some Thai houses are as much as thirty meters long and from eight to ten meters wide. In rare cases one finds much larger houses which are from seventy to seventy-five meters long and twenty-five meters wide.

342 Thai houses very often have no verandas on their long sides, but always have two, one at each end, which are covered by rounded roofs
554 and serve as reception terraces or antichambers.

The houses of mandarins and notables can be distinguished from the others by the fact that the roof rafters and the trusses of the gables extend above the line of the roof and cross. These members are decorated with wooden silhouettes or scallops ending in discs which, depending on their number and arrangement, indicate the rank of the house's owner.

149; Reinach--184 G-8 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8
Kha

291 Men's clothing consists of a jacket and pair of trousers which have the same shape as those of the Lus and are made of coarse cotton cloth manufactured locally. Their headgear is a turban cut from a piece of Turkey-red cotton.

For work, clothing is generally reduced to a narrow strip of cloth forming a belt, one of the ends of which is passed between the legs and fastened in the middle of the back.

During the cold season a jacket is added to this loin-cloth.

The women wear a skirt of the Laotian type which is fastened under the armpits so that it does not come down below the calves of the legs. A short jacket completes their costume. On their head they wear a turban which is generally dark in color. [Illustration alongside text here]

301 Jewelry. Both sexes have silver or copper jewelry such as wide stiff neckbands, bracelets, rings, buttons, clasps, etc. Like the Lus and the Youns, the Khas pierce the lobes of their ears. Often the holes are of such dimensions that a roll of leaves or a bouquet of flowers can be inserted in them.

262 Food. Their diet is very like that of the Laotians and Thais. When there is a shortage of rice its place is taken, until the following harvest, by yams, taros, bamboo sprouts, banana flowers, etc.

462 Occupations. Women and children are given the hardest tasks imaginable, and it is unusual to meet them without baskets on their backs. The men carry only their bag, their sword, their rifle and their pipe.

595 Marriage. Divorce. Adultery. Polygamy is widespread among the Khas, and the number of wives a man possesses is the sign of his wealth. For, regarded as they are rather like beasts of burden and working constantly, the more numerous these wives are the more they will produce.

584 [254] The rules for marriage preliminaries closely resemble the Laotian customs and the ceremony itself, although much less splendid, comprises the same rites. To be sure, the role of the bonzes is filled here by "Pho-Tao," that is to say elders or sorcerers.

586 Divorce may be requested by the wife, or one of the wives, for personal reasons. It may also take place by mutual consent. Finally,
684 it is compulsory in the case of adultery, since the guilty woman must marry her accomplice.

Contrary to what is the case elsewhere, adultery on the part of the husband is punished by a double fine awarded to his wife's family

Kha

586 684 and to the family of his accomplice. In a case of flagrante delicto, however, he has the right to kill the guilty parties.

[462] Kha women, when married, are renowned for their austerity, and their conduct is usually exemplary. Moreover, they are very soon disfigured by precocious and repeated childbearing, as well as by the difficult work which they do, and after two or three years of marriage the poor women are no longer tempting to anyone.

764 Deaths. Cremation is not practiced by the Khas. They bury their dead in as summary a fashion as the Lus, and for a few days bring food to the freshly filled grave. Then the latter is abandoned.

When a chief or a rich man is to be buried, the body is placed in a coffin hewn from a tree trunk.

181 Character. Like all oppressed peoples, the Khas are reserved and timid. They are afraid of innovations and new faces. But in intimate gatherings with their own people they are just as merry and love music, dances, celebrations and festivals just as much as the other peoples of Laos.

535 536 Music and dancing. They know certain dances imitated from the Lus, pantomimes (1) which resemble the I-Ke of the Burmese,

(1) They also have the habit of performing scenes in pantomime, rather like extremely primitive ballets. We shall describe one such scene:

"A group of girls, guarded by two respectable men, are pursuing the pleasures of dancing. A rogue comes up and tries to make off with one of the girls. After a few unsuccessful attempts he succeeds in eluding the guards' vigilance, jumps forward to seize the girl on whom he has designs, and clasps her in his arms. But his happiness is too much for him and he falls senseless at the feet of the girl he wanted to abduct." (Le Laos français.) - [Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos), "Notice sur le Laos français," in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

and [255] singsong legends in which the r's and k's roll out in terrible fashion. 533 They also have songs which they accompany on flutes, clarinets and single-stringed violins. Some tribes have xylophones, these being instruments composed of bamboo tubes of [Illustration here] different thickness and length, each of which produces a tone varying with its size. It will be seen that by striking with a [256] stick of wood on these tubes, a combination of more or less harmonious sounds will